

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 PANAMA 02933 192058Z

70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 /061 W

----- 096004

P 192011Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3947

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 2933

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJ: BUNKER USIA INTERVIEW PROMPTS REACTION

SUMMARY: LOCAL DISSEMINATION OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S USIA INTERVIEW HAS OCCASIONED STATEMENT BY GOP OFFICIAL DIOGENES DE LA ROSA AND CRITICAL EDITORIAL COMMENT. DE LA ROSA TOOK ISSUE WITH REMARK CONCERNING U.S. RETENTION OF AREAS NECESSARY FOR CANAL DEFENSE AND REACTED TO OBSERVATION THAT U.S. RATIFICATION MIGHT BE DELAYED FOR YEARS. EDITORIAL IN ESTRELLA NOTED CONSEQUENCES OF INDEFINITE DELAY IN U.S. RATIFICATION AND STATED IT WOULD BE SERIOUS MISTAKE FOR PANAMA TO APPROVE NEW TREATY BEFORE THE U.S. COLUMNIST LUIS RESPTREPO SAW BOTH REFERENCE TO RETENTION OF AREAS FOR CANAL DEFENSE AND PROBLEMS OF RATIFICATION AS PART OF U.S. EFFORT TO EXTRACT ITSELF FROM ITS COMMITMENT TO NEW TREATY AND WARNED PANAMANIAN AGAINST GIVING U.S. EXCUSE FOR DOING SO.

END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S TAPED USIA INTERVIEW ON CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATION, RELEASED TO LOCAL MEDIA MAY 15, HAS PROMPTED SHARP REACTION IN MEDIA AND FROM CANAL TREATY ADVISOR DIOGENES DE LA ROSA. INTERVIEW WAS BROADCAST OVER PANAMA'S TWO TELEVISION CHANNELS, RECEIVED
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 PANAMA 02933 192058Z

ENTESNIVE RADIO PLAY, AND WAS PUBLISHED IN PRESS.

2. DIOGENES DE LA ROSA, IN REMARKS REPORTEDLY MADE TO ASSOCIATED PRESS, WAS QUOTED IN MAY 18 EDITIONS OF LA ESTRELLA AND STAR & HERALD AS TAKING ISSUE WITH TWO OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S COMMENTS. REACTING TO OBSERVATION THAT U.S. SENATE RATIFICATION OF A NEW TREATY MIGHT TAKE YEARS, DE LA ROSA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PANAMA IS WILLING TO WAIT "SOME MONTHS" BETWEEN THE SIGNING OF A NEW TREATY AND ITS RATIFICATION AND STATED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD TOLD FOREIGN MINISTER TACK IN WASHINGTON THAT AGREEMENT ON CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS COULD BE REACHED IN SIXTY DAYS. WITH REGARD TO COMMENT THAT U.S WOULD RETAIN CONTROL OF AIR SPACE AND LAND AND WATER AREAS NECESSARY FOR DEFENSE OF THE CANAL, DE LA ROSA WAS QUOTED AS SAYING PANAMA DOES NOT ACCEPT THAT THE U.S. WILL RETAIN ("ESTE VINCULADO" IN SPANISH; STAR TRANSLATED IT AS "TIE-UP") PANAMANIAN TERRITORY.

3. IN ITS MAY 19 EDITORIAL, LA ESTRELLA ADDRESSED QUESTION OF SENATE DELAY IN RATIFICATION. OPINING THAT AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE EXTENSIVE DELAY WAS NOT ACCIDENTAL, ESTRELLA OFFERED THAT PERHAPS IT WAS INTENDED TO REASSURE THOSE "ZONIANS" WHO HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT CERTAIN ASPECTS OF A NEW TREATY WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY EXECUTIVE ACTION. BE THAT AS IT MAY, OBSERVED ESTRELLA, IT IS "ABSOLUTELY INDISPENSIBLE" THAT SIGNATURE OF A NEW TREATY BE PRECEDED BY A CONVICTION THAT IT WILL BE RATIFIED PROMPTLY BY THE U.S. AND, ACCORDING TO THE EDITORIAL, IT IS EQUALLY NECESSARY THAT U.S. RATIFICATION PRECEDE PANAMANIAN APPROVAL. TO REVERSE THE SEQUENCE WOULD BE A SERIOUS ERROR, FOR U.S. SENATE REJECTION OF OR INDEFINITE DELAY ON A TREATY APPROVED BY PANAMA WOULD PROVOKE "PREDICTABLE" PANAMANIAN REACTION AND EXACERBATE THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

4. LUIS RESTREPO, IN HIS MAY 19 MATUTINO COLUMN, SAW THE INTERVIEW AS PART OF AN EFFORT TO PROVOKE A PANAMANIAN REACTION WHICH WOULD ALLOW THE U.S. TO BACK OUT OF ITS COMMITMENT TO CONCLUDE A NEW TREATY. CITING "SUDDEN" DISSEMINATION OF INTERVIEW IN PANAMA, AND LINKING IT WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 PANAMA 02933 192058Z

OPPOSITION ACTIVITIES IN U.S. AND CANAL ZONE, RESPRETO ASSERTED THE INTERVIEW INTRODUCED "NEW PROBLEMS" INTO THE NEGOTIATION. TERMING THE "OFFICIAL" PANAMANIAN REACTION AS SERENE BUT ENERGETIC, RESPRETO WARNED THAT PANAMA MUST BE ALERT TO MANEUVERS OF OTHER SIDE TO LAY "TRAPS" IN THE HOPE OF FINDING WAY TO ESCAPE ITS COMMITMENTS.

5. COMMENT: WHILE IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW OFFICIAL
DE LA ROSA'S REACTION WAS, IT DOES REFLECT PANAMANIAN
SENSITIVITY TO PUBLIC COMMENTS BY U.S. OFFICIALS THAT
STRESS U.S. INTERESTS RATHER THAN PANAMA'S ASPIRATIONS.
EDITORIAL REACTION, MOREOVER, UNDERLINES CONTINUED PANAMANIAN
SUSPICIONS OF U.S. INTENTIONS CONCERNING ITS CONTINUED
MILITARY PRESENCE AND RESOLVE OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO
CONCLUDE AND VIGOROUSLY PUSH NEW TREATY THROUGH
RATIFICATION. ON THE LATTER, WHILE TORRIJOS HAS MADE IT KNOWN
THAT HE BELIEVES NEGOTIATION MUST BE PURSUED WITHOUT
REGARD TO SUBSEQUENT RATIFICATION DIFFICULTIES -- OF WHICH
HE IS AWARE -- HE CANNOT APPEAR TO ACCEPT WITHOUT REBUTTAL
THE IDEA THAT IMPLEMENTATION MAY BE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED.
JORDEN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, TREATY RATIFICATION, PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, CANALS, NEGOTIATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PANAMA02933
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750176-0004
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750539/aaaabjdr.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 SEP 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BUNKER USIA INTERVIEW PROMPTS REACTION SUMMARY: LOCAL DISSEMINATION OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S USIA
TAGS: PFOR, PN, US, USIA, (BUNKER, ELLSWORTH), (DE LA ROSA, DIOGENES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006